

March 7, 2025

Oregon House Committee On Labor & Workplace Standards

Dear Committee members,

I am asking you to oppose **HB 2548** because it threatens my and my family's ability to keep farming. Oregon already has some of the highest labor costs in the country, and after several tough years, I can't afford more regulations and wage increases.

This bill would give unelected officials the power to set wages and safety rules that go far beyond current protections, adding more regulatory burden to small farms like mine. Farmers know how devastating this regulatory model is. Oregon's state agencies have adopted very harmful regulations in the last five years with little to no accountability for their actions. This board would be no different; its members aren't even elected.

**HB 2548** unfairly targets agriculture by taking away at-will employment, meaning I wouldn't be able to make necessary staffing decisions without the risk of costly lawsuits. One claim can cost tens of thousands of dollars or more. I also don't believe that farms should be forced keep employees who may not meet performance expectations or adapt to the demands of the job. All other sectors in Oregon would be at-will, but farms—whose employment needs are impacted by weather, yields, trade, market conditions, pests, diseases, etc.—would not. Not only is that unfair, but it will likely result in job loss, not job security.

This bill doesn't help workers or consumers; it just makes farming harder and more expensive. I have already had to reduce hours for workers to comply with agricultural overtime, and **HB 2548** would have more severe consequences.

Please, I urge you to vote **no** to protect our farms and jobs.

Thank you for your consideration.

*Carol Root Seeber*

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